

**The Collect of the Day:** O God, whose blessed Son became poor that we, through his poverty, might be rich: Deliver us from an inordinate love of this world, that we, inspired by the devotion of your servant Sergius, may serve you with singleness of heart and attain to the riches of the age to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**Psalm 39:4-8** *Read responsively by the half-verse, breaking at the asterisk.*

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4 My heart was hot within me; while I pondered, the fire burst into flame; \*

**I spoke out with my tongue:**

5 LORD, let me know my end and the number of my days, \* **so that I may know how short my life is.**

6 You have given me a mere handful of days, and my lifetime is as nothing in your sight; \*

**truly, even those who stand erect are but a puff of wind.**

7 We walk about like a shadow, and in vain we are in turmoil; \*

**we heap up riches and cannot tell who will gather them.**

8 And now, what is my hope? \* **O Lord, my hope is in you.**

**First Reading:** A Reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes (29:1-9)

The merciful lend to their neighbors; by holding out a helping hand they keep the commandments. Lend to your neighbor in his time of need; repay your neighbor when a loan falls due. Keep your promise and be honest with him, and on every occasion you will find what you need. Many regard a loan as a windfall, and cause trouble to those who help them. One kisses another's hands until he gets a loan, and is deferential in speaking of his neighbor's money; but at the time for repayment he delays, and pays back with empty promises, and finds fault with the time. If he can pay, his creditor will hardly get back half, and will regard that as a windfall. If he cannot pay, the borrower has robbed the other of his money, and he has needlessly made him an enemy; he will repay him with curses and reproaches, and instead of glory will repay him with dishonor. Many refuse to lend, not because of meanness, but from fear of being defrauded needlessly. Nevertheless, be patient with someone in humble circumstances, and do not keep him waiting for your alms. Help the poor for the commandment's sake, and in their need do not send them away empty-handed.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Second Reading:** A Reading from the Gospel of Mark (2:23-28)

One sabbath Jesus and his disciples were going through the grainfields; and as they made their way his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the sabbath?" And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need of food? He entered the house of God, when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and he gave some to his companions." Then he said to them, "The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath; so the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath." The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Sergius of Radonezh, Monastic, Moscow, 1392:** To the people of Russia, Sergius is a national hero and their patron saint. He was born in Rostov around 1314. Civil war in Russia forced Sergius' family to leave the city and to live by farming at Radonezh near Moscow. At the age of twenty, he and his brother began a life of seclusion in a nearby forest, from which developed the Monastery of the Holy Trinity, a center of revival of Russian Christianity. There Sergius remained for the rest of his life, refusing higher advancement, including the see of Moscow in 1378. Sergius' firm support of Prince Dimitri Donskoi helped to rally the Russians against their Tartar overlords. Dimitri won a decisive victory against them at the Kulikovo Plains in 1380 and laid the foundation of his people's independent national life. Sergius was simple and gentle in nature, mystical in temperament, and eager to ensure that his monks should serve the needs of their neighbors. He was able to inspire intense devotion to the Orthodox faith. He died in 1392, and pilgrims still visit his shrine at the monastery of Sergiyev Posad, which he founded in 1340. The city, located some forty-three miles northwest of Moscow, contains several splendid cathedrals and is the residence of the Patriarch of Moscow. The Russian Church observes Sergius' memory on September 25. His name is familiar to Anglicans from the Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius, a society established to promote closer relations between the Anglican and Orthodox Churches.